

There was a brief break in America's hard-line approach when, in December 2014, President Barack Obama announced a loosening of the embargo and the normalization of relations. President Trump reversed course and rolled out many of the past, failed sanctions against Cuba, plus some new ones.

Those have included restricting Americans' travel to officially approved group trips with cultural organizations, ending the allowance for American cruise ships to dock in Cuban ports, plans to reduce to \$1,000 the amount of money that Cuban-Americans can send to Cuba every three months, and allowing United States citizens to sue foreign companies over the use of property expropriated by the Castro government (a provision suspended by Republican and Democratic administrations since it was passed in 1996).

By the White House's own admission, these policies will reduce by half the number of American tourists visiting the island. That number last year was 600,000. American tourists had been helping to support the private restaurants, shops and the approximately 20,000 Airbnb's that have sprung up in recent years.

Support for Havana from the regime in Venezuela, another target of the Trump administration, has been halted, compounding Cuba's economic troubles.

Shortly after he was inaugurated as president of Venezuela in 1999, Hugo Chávez, threw the struggling Cuban economy a lifeline, sending 100,000 barrels of oil a day, half of which the Cuban government sold on the world market for hard currency. As partial payment for the cheap oil, Cubans provided intelligence and military support to Mr. Chávez and to his successor, Nicolás Maduro, to help them consolidate their corrupt, autocratic project.

But as Venezuelan oil production plunged in recent years, and global prices fell, Cuba's life-support system dried up to between 20,000 and 50,000 barrels per day, as of April.

The Trump administration has seen the weakness of these two economies as an opportunity to push for regime change in both countries.

The first target was Mr. Maduro, hoping his fall would bring democracy to his country and thus bankrupt the Cuban regime, finally bringing it to its knees. Now, as administration officials face their failed, overhyped efforts to topple Mr. Maduro, they have changed their focus: they are blaming Cuba for Mr. Maduro's survival—rather than Mr. Maduro for the Cuban government's survival.

Cubans—and the Cuban leaders—have been through worse. American restrictions on trade and travel to Cuba are minor compared to the difficulties they faced after the collapse of the Soviet Union, during which the Cuban economy contracted by more than one third. Even then, with food, electricity and hope all in short supply, the Castro government survived.

Today, Cuba's leadership, under Raúl Castro's handpicked successor, Miguel Díaz-Canel, is once again rallying the island nation's citizens to tighten their belts, for example by promoting hutia, a local rodent, as a source of protein. And other authoritarian powers, like China and Russia, are more than willing to throw even just a bit of economic help, and lots of anti-American ideological support, which didn't exist during the post-Cold War period.

The Trump administration's strategy will fail, as it has in the past, and ordinary Cuban citizens will continue to bare the brunt of a misguided American policy. When will American leaders finally learn the lessons of history?

TRIBUTE TO KEVIN L. SHAFER, P.E., RECIPIENT OF THE MILWAUKEE WATER COUNCIL'S THIRD ANNUAL "WATER WARRIOR OF THE YEAR" AWARD

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2019

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Kevin Shafer, the long serving Executive Director of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) and a recent recipient of the Milwaukee Water Council's third annual "Water Warrior of the Year Award," which is given to acknowledge those in the water industry who advance the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math (STEAM) education.

MMSD provides wastewater treatment recclamation and flood management, among other services, for about 1.1 million customers in 28 communities in the Greater Milwaukee Area.

The award acknowledges Kevin's dedication to growing MMSD's internship program which provides students with hands-on learning experience to inspire and educate students about future water-related careers in areas such as water quality protection, laboratory services, engineering, construction and sustainability. According to the CEO of the Water Council, "When it comes to supporting and nurturing our next generation of water professionals we always know that Kevin will say an emphatic yes when we ask him to do more."

For over 25 years, MMSD has grown its internship program which now hires 25 students every summer. For example, during the summer of 2018, MMSD worked with the Water Council to place two African-American junior engineering students from Tuskegee University to work as interns with a goal of increasing the number of African-Americans pursuing water as a career. This is just one of several efforts by MMSD to invest in and develop a diverse water workforce in the Milwaukee area.

Kevin Shafer has served as executive director of MMSD since 2002. Throughout his career at MMSD, Kevin has helped to make the utility a leader when it comes to the adoption and use of green infrastructure, has been instrumental in efforts to transform MMSD's stormwater management system, and continues to foster innovative means of protecting the District's water supply.

Prior to this position, Kevin worked in the private sector at an international engineering firm and spent six years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Currently, Kevin is a Chair on both the United States' Water Alliance Board of Directors and the Water Council Board of Directors. Kevin was formerly President of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

It is an honor to recognize Kevin Shafer for his dedication to the residents served by MMSD and in being an innovative water industry leader who is constantly trying to find new ways to deal with the challenges facing MMSD. I applaud the high level of professionalism and service that he has brought to MMSD and have no doubt he will continue to serve our community in the same distinguished manner as he has done throughout his career.

IN RECOGNITION OF WAHCONAH PARK'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2019

Mr. NEAL. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the 100th anniversary of Wahconah Park in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Wahconah Park has been a loyal, magical home for America's favorite pastime since the 19th century, when the game of baseball was first played on its grounds in 1892. Most of the ballpark's facilities, however, including its wooden grandstand, were officially built in 1919—and they have filled with lovers of the game ever since.

Over the course of more than a century, Wahconah Park has hosted numerous Minor League Baseball teams, other professional clubs and affiliates, as well as summer collegiate teams—like the Pittsfield Suns, who currently call Wahconah home. As the Pittsfield Suns' team owner Jeff Goldklang has said, baseball is about history, and it's about memories. Wahconah Park is certainly steeped in both. It is a testament to the game Americans have loved for decades and continues to be a destination for generations of families who come to the Berkshires to watch it come to life. And beyond baseball, Wahconah Park has also played host to various high school sporting events, and alternated into a concert venue at times as well.

Once again, Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate Wahconah Park on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. The ballpark is city-owned and has been integral to the fabric of Pittsfield's community. It represents the longevity, history, and character of not only the Berkshires, but all of western Massachusetts.

RECOGNIZING JERRY SHEA, SR.

HON. CLAY HIGGINS

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 2019

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a pillar of Louisiana, Iberia Parish icon, Jerry Shea, Sr., who recently passed away at the age of 93.

Jerry was born in Louisiana and lived some young years in Texas. He has been a resident of New Iberia, LA, since 1942. After serving three years in the Air Force and graduating from Louisiana State University with a degree in petroleum engineering, he went to work for his father's welding company, Bayou Welding Works. Eventually Jerry and his late brother Edward "Buddy" Shea, Jr. went on to start several offshoots of Bayou, including Bayou Pipe Coating in 1971. Jerry was inducted into the National Association of Pipe Coating Applicators Hall of Fame in 1996 and retired from Bayou in 2000 after providing 55 years of leadership in the family business. In addition to his family business, he served as chairman of the board of New Iberia National Bank during the 1980s.

Despite his business success, Jerry is even more well-known for his commitment and dedication to his community. He and his wife, Harriet, have received numerous recognitions for